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La versificación irregular. Por PEDRO HENRÍQUEZ UREÑA. Madrid: Centro de estudios históricos, 1920. Pp. viii+338.

The theory of *versificación irregular* is the most important matter which now concerns Hispanic philology. Until scholars agree on this point they will be at a loss as to the proper method of editing most poetic texts of the Middle Ages. If the principle of irregularity be admitted, then numerous texts edited according to the principle of syllable counting must be scrapped and the work done over again. Nearly the whole school of Spanish philologists and the younger Hispanists in other lands accept the new theory. The objectors are mainly those who have edited according to the old theory and may therefore be said to hold a vested interest in it.

We know that Caesar's soldiers chanted rhythmic verse at the very time that rhetors were teaching the quantitative system and cultured poets were practicing it. Similarly Henríquez Ureña finds that through the ages there have existed side by side in Spain three distinct metrical systems: (1) The learned and sophisticated system of syllable counting. (2) A popular rhythmic system, not dissimilar to that in vogue in Germanic languages. (The *verso de arte mayor* is a learned adaptation of this.) (3) A metric meter, devoid alike of syllable counting and regularly recurring stress.

One who has digested the evidence presented in Henríquez Ureña's previously published *Antología de la versificación irregular* and the additional matter in the present volume can scarcely doubt that all three of these systems existed. Irregular meter is to be found sporadically in the works of the great writers of the Renaissance and is apt to crop out in the latest zarzuela. Why not then also in the less cultured Middle Ages? It is here that the debate begins. In spite of the numerous examples cited from this period also, there are those who would explain away everything on the theory of scribal garbling. When the question was debated á propos of the meter of the *Cid*, these scholars demanded another example of like irregularity. It was forthcoming when Menéndez Pidal published his *Roncesvalles* fragment; but not every doubting Thomas was satisfied. So the matter stands.

Henríquez Ureña appears to be least sound when he goes to the other extreme and denies that scribal garbling played an important rôle in such works as *El libro de Apolonio* and the *Poema de Fernán González*. At least he explains most departures from the norm by stating that the authors were unsuccessful in freeing themselves wholly from the popular measures to which they were accustomed. But these writers were using a syllable-counting measure. It was simple and easy to write. While the lines showing an incorrect count are numerous, they are not so numerous that garbling may not account for the imperfect state of the MSS. Most lines may be restored by simple emendations. There is here no such astonishing irregularity as in the *Cid*.

Henríquez Ureña contributes little to the discussion of the epic meters. This had already been thoroughly debated. But, by making it plain that irregular meter is far more prevalent than had been supposed, he renders the theories of Milá and Menéndez Pidal more plausible.

In connection with the theory of irregular versification, it might repay some scholar to make a metrical study of certain of the Franco-Veneto bilingual epics and of such metric anomalies as the Italian Romance, *Buovo d'Antona*. The French *jongleur* touring northern Italy cared for little else than to impart his story to a foreign audience. He clipped and mangled Italian words to attain an acute assonance contrary to the genius of the Italian speech. Form went by the board. Apparently the meter also suffered. Now there may have existed also a Franco-Hispanic bilingual epic in the region of the Pyrenees. There is no proof of its existence, but nothing would be more likely. And would not such an epic have furthered metrical irregularity in Spain?

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Un aspecto en la elaboración de "El Quijote." Discurso leído en el Ateneo de Madrid. Por RAMÓN MENÉNDEZ PIDAL. Madrid: 1920. Pp. 54.

In this important contribution Menéndez Pidal proposes a thesis, which, if accepted, will alter radically our ideas about the genesis of *Don Quijote*. The intimate connection between the chapters of the novel describing the "first sally" and the *Entremés de los romances* has long been recognized. Adolfo de Castro held the latter to be one of the lost works of Cervantes. The Cotarelos, father and son, maintain that it was written subsequent to *Don Quijote*, of which it is alleged to be a parody. Menéndez Pidal thinks that, though Cervantes did not write it, the farce in question was written prior to the novel, was Cervantes' chief source of inspiration for the opening chapters, that story and characters improve and the use made of ballads changes completely when the author of *Don Quijote* gets beyond his source and is left to his own devices. This startling theory is argued with plausibility, but not completely proved.

Menéndez Pidal finds that all the thirty-one ballads cited in the farce appear in the *Flor de varios y nuevos romances*, Valencia, 1591, and that no other collection contains all the thirty-one. The deluded peasant-hero starts out to fight the English. Now expeditions against the English were fitted out in 1588, 1596, 1597, 1601, and 1602. The first date is too early. He concludes that the farce was written between 1596 and 1602, but inclines to the date 1597. De Castro had previously shown that the farce alludes to Elizabeth and Drake as living. The latter died in 1595, and the news of